What is employment non-discrimination based on sexual orientation?

Discrimination is the unequal treatment of persons for a reason that has nothing to do with work performance or abilities. Discrimination laws are dependent on the particular statutes established at city, county, state and federal levels.

Most Americans are surprised to learn that there is no federal protection from employment discrimination based on sexual orientation and that in most jurisdictions it is perfectly legal to fire an individual because they are gay or lesbian. Because sexual orientation is not a legally protected class as defined by civil rights law, a general non-discrimination policy does not give any legal protection to gays and lesbians. Only by specifying sexual orientation in the employment policy, can organizations extend legal protection to all their employees.

Employment Non-Discrimination Policy Sample

In order to ensure equal opportunity to all employees, the words "sexual orientation" and "gender identity and expression" should be a part of your written employment non-discrimination policy. The required wording may be inserted into your existing employment non-discrimination policy, or a sample policy is provided below.

Sample Employment Non-Discrimination Policy

[Organization's name] provides equal employment opportunity. [Organization's name] does not discriminate against any individual in the terms or conditions of employment on the basis of race, color, nation or ethnic origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, physical or mental disability, marital or family status, military or veterans status, or any other basis made unlawful by applicable federal, state, or local laws or regulations. This policy applies to all aspects of the application process and employment relationships, including recruitment, application, hiring, compensation, benefits, training, job assignments, transfers, performance evaluation, promotions, layoffs and terminations.

This policy also applies to relationships with outside vendors and customers, use of contractors and consultants, volunteers and clients, and in dealing with the general public.

Why provide employment non-discrimination?

In growing numbers, both public and private employers across Colorado and the country have recognized that ensuring employment non-discrimination based on sexual orientation is a no-cost way to increase competitiveness in the labor market and to promote fairness and equality in the workplace. Bottom line – employment equality is good for business.

Attracting and retaining the best workers is critical. "An essential element of Imation's EEO policy states that it will not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation." William T. Monahan, CEO of Imation Corp.wrote about his company's policy in June 1999. "In order to compete effectively for these individuals, the company has adopted policies that it believes provide a diverse, safe and productive work environment."

Benefits include:

- ***Improved employee recruitment and retention***

  With a growing number of employers adding sexual orientation to their policies, it is increasingly easy for workers to select employers with a more welcoming work environment. Howard Bard, a partner with Feder Semo Clark and Bard P.C., a benefits and employment law firm, concludes, "These policies are a draw in a competitive marketplace. It's a costless benefit."

- ***More equitable and inclusive workplace***

  A principle goal of any organization should be to create a culture in which each employee has the opportunity to make a full contribution and to advance on the basis of performance. The potential benefits include gaining market share, improving your competitive advantage for labor and patronage, and taking full advantage of your greatest resource – all the people, gay and straight, who work for you.

The City of Colorado Springs specifically recognizes this in their Anti-Discrimination policy which states "The City seeks to establish a diverse and inclusive work environment..." and "It is the responsibility of all City employees, managers, and supervisors to conduct themselves in a manner that fosters inclusion and respect for the individual and maximizes every employee's capability to be productive in their jobs." Since it is clearly the intent and practice of the City of Colorado Springs not to discriminate against their employees based on sexual orientation, the addition of the term "sexual orientation" to the policy would formalize and clarify that commitment.

➢ ***Improved productivity and business success***

In her book *The Change Masters*, Rosabeth Moss Kanter compared 47 companies, chosen by human resource professionals for their progressive policies, with firms of equal size in their industries. The progressive companies were more profitable and enjoyed greater growth and return on investment over a twenty-year span than the comparison companies.

Innovation and overall regional economic vitality are closely associated with the presence of gays and other indicators of tolerance and diversity, such as the level of racial and ethnic integration, according to research by the Urban Institute in 2003.

Support for Employment Non-Discrimination

There is overwhelming support for employment non-discrimination protection for gays and lesbians. This includes support across all political, religious and demographic groups and from the public, corporate and governmental sectors.

Public

- 65% of moderate and conservative Colorado Springs voters support employment non-discrimination for gays and lesbians (vs 29% strongly or somewhat oppose) – Ridder/Braden Inc., December 2003
- 80% of Coloradoans support equal rights for gays and lesbians. 76% support job discrimination rights for gays and lesbians. - Ciruli Associates, December, 2002
- 85% of Americans support equal opportunity for gay people in the workplace. - 2001 Gallup study
- On the issue of job discrimination, 70% of fundamentalist Christians, 80% of mainline Protestants and 78% of Catholics agree that it should be illegal to fire people from their jobs just because of their sexual orientation. - Feldman Group, May 1999
- Republicans agree by more than four to one (80% to 18%) that gay and lesbian Americans should have equal rights in terms of job opportunities. - Newsweek poll 2000

Government

The inclusion of sexual orientation in employment non-discrimination is provide by…

- State of Colorado (public employees)
- Cities of Arvada, Aspen, Boulder, Crested Butte, Denver, Ft. Collins, Glendale, Lakewood, Manitou Springs, Telluride
- Nationally, government entities providing employment non-discrimination based on sexual orientation include Federal civilian workers (since 1998), 23 state governments, 266 local governments and quasi-governmental agencies and 38 federal government divisions

More than 60 million Americans now live in towns, cities, counties or states with laws banning discrimination based on sexual orientation according to the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force Policy Institute January 2000 report.

Business

More than 2,000 companies have written non-discrimination policies covering sexual orientation, including 88% of Fortune 500 companies, 1218 private companies, non-profits and unions and 382 colleges and universities.

Colorado Springs employers with non-discrimination including sexual orientation

Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce
Colorado Springs Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
Pikes Peak Library District
University of Colorado, Colorado Springs
Colorado College
Pikes Peak Community College Foundation
Memorial Hospital
El Paso County Medical Society
Penrose-St. Francis Health
Ford Motor Credit
NxTrend Technology
Wal-Mart Stores Inc.
IBM
AIG
Verizon
Home Depot
Hewlett-Packard
Boeing
McKesson Corp.
State Farm Group
AT&T
Target Corp.
J.P. Morgan Chase
Sears, Roebuck & Co.
Albertson's Inc.
MetLife
Kmart Corp.
Morgan Stanley
Safeway Inc.
J.C. Penny Corp.
United Parcel Service
Allstate
Walgreens Co.
Wells Fargo & Co.
Merrill Lynch & Co.
Sprint Corp.
Lockheed Martin Corp.
Prudential Financial Inc.
Intel Corp.
Motorola Inc.
Lowe's
PepsiCo Inc.
New York Life
American Express Co.
Wachovia Corp.
Honeywell International
Bank One Corp.
FedEx Corp.
MassMutual Life
Johnson Controls
Cigna Corp.
Best Buy Co. Inc.
Coca-Cola Co.
Northrop Grumman.
Raytheon Co.
Northwest Mutual Life
Xerox Corp.
Qwest Communications
US Bancorp
McDonald's Corp.
Rite Aid Corp.
Gap Inc.
General Dynamics Corp.
Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co.
Lucent Technologies
Anthem
Eastman Kodak Co.
Sun Microsystems
Office Depot Inc.
PacifiCare Health
Waste Management Inc.
Marriott
Manpower
AFLAC
Oracle Corp.
USAA
John Hancock Financial
Countrywide Financial
Aramark Corp.
Nextel Communications
NCR Corp.
EMC Corp.
AutoZone Inc.
Barnes & Noble Inc.
American Family
Applied Materials Inc.
IKON Office Solutions
Ryder Systems Inc.
OfficeMax Inc.
First American Corp.
RadioShack Corp.
Foot Locker
Charles Schwab
Longs Drug Stores
Harley-Davidson Inc.
Big Lots
ServiceMaster
Ross Stores
Borders Group Inc.
Starbucks Corp.
Ace Hardware

El Paso County Nonprofit employers with employment non-discrimination

Alzheimer's Association
2930 Austin Bluffs Parkway, Ste 101
Colorado Springs, CO
80918

American Cancer Society
1445 N Union Blvd, Suite B-100
Colorado Springs, CO
80809

American Heart Association
415 North Tejon Suite 201
Colorado Springs, CO
80903

American Red Cross - Pikes Peak Region
1040 South 8th Street
Colorado Springs, CO
80906

ARC of the Pikes Peak Region
12 North Meade Avenue
Colorado Springs, CO
80909

Assistance League of Colorado Springs
211 East Costilla Street
Colorado Springs, CO
80903

Association for Children for Enforcement of Support
7645 N. Union Blvd., #101
Colorado Springs, CO
80909

Autism Education Action Group
1042 W Baptist Rd Suite #209
Colorado Springs, CO
80921

Bethhaven, Inc
510 E. Willamette Avenue
Colorado Springs, CO
80903

Big Brothers Big Sisters
111. S. Tejon Suite 302
Colorado Springs, CO
80903

Colorado Police Protective Association
1485 Kelly Johnson Blvd. Suite 230
Colorado Springs, CO
80920

Colorado Springs Assets for Youth
1506 North Hancock Avenue
Colorado Springs, CO
80903

Colorado Springs Chapter of Hadassah
1405 Big Valley Drive
Colorado Springs, CO
80919

Colorado Springs Children's Chorale
PO Box 7841
Colorado Springs, CO
80933

Colorado Springs Chorale
16 East Platte Ave Suite 204A
Colorado Springs, CO
80903

Colorado Springs Community Ventures
PO Box 1542
Colorado Springs, CO
80903

Colorado Springs Dance Theatre
7 E. Bijou St., #209
Colorado Springs, CO
80903

Colorado Springs Down Syndrome
PO Box 2364
Colorado Springs, CO
80901

Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center
30 West Dale St.
Colorado Springs, CO
80903

Colorado Springs Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
912 N. Circle
Colorado Springs, CO
80910

FutureSelf
1826 North Prospect Street
Colorado Springs, CO
80907

Girl Scouts Wagon Wheel Council
3535 Parkmoor Village Dr
Colorado Springs, CO
80907

Good News Foundation
221 North Academy Blvd. Suite 290
Colorado Springs, CO
80909

Harrison Community Education Foundation
1060 Harrison Road
Colorado Springs, CO
80906

Healing Images Artfest Association
PO Box 50093
Colorado Springs, CO
80949

High Plains Church, Unitarian Universalist
P.O. Box 62425
Colorado Springs, CO
80962-2425

Home and Health Care
2812 East Bijou Street
Colorado Springs, CO
80909

Horticultural Art Society of Colorado Springs
PO Box 7706
Colorado Springs, CO
80933

Housing Advocacy Coalition
2023 East Bijou Street
Colorado Springs, CO
80909

Humane Society of the Pikes Peak Region
610 Abbott Lane
Colorado Springs, CO
80905

Pikes Peak Family Connections
2220 E. Bijou, Suite 2E
Colorado Springs, CO
80909

Pikes Peak Gay and Lesbian Community Center
PO Box 607
Colorado Springs, CO
80901

Pikes Peak Hospice & Palliative Care
825 East Pikes Peak Ave., Suite 600
Colorado Springs, CO
80903-5607

Pikes Peak Justice and Peace Commission
29 S. Institute
Colorado Springs, CO
80903

Pikes Peak Lavender Film Festival
PO Box 1987
Colorado Springs, CO
80901

Pikes Peak Metropolitan Community Church
1102 S 21st Street
Colorado Springs, CO
80904

Pikes Peak Partnership
2377 North Academy Blvd
Colorado Springs, CO
80909

Pikes Peak Philharmonic
402 Woodflower Drive
Colorado Springs, CO
80904

Pikes Peak Therapeutic Riding Center
6325 Sorpressa Lane
Colorado Springs, CO
80920

Pikes Peak United Way
518 North Nevada Avenue
Colorado Springs, CO
80903

Black Forest School
PO Box 88238
Colorado Springs, CO 80908

Boys and Girls Club of the Pikes Peak Region PO Box 15919 Colorado Springs, CO 80935

Brain Injury Association of Colorado
P.O. Box 75987
Colorado Springs, CO 80970-5987

Care and Share
4875 Northpark Drive
Colorado Springs, CO 80918

Care Castle, Inc.
1430 North Hancock
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Carousel - A Special Riding Facility
1230 Loflin Road
Colorado Springs, CO 80930

CASA of Colorado Springs
701 S. Cascade
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Catamount Institute
121 East Pikes Peak, Suite 329
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Center for Creative Leadership
850 Leader Way
Colorado Springs, CO 80906-1353

Centro de la Familia
815 N Nevada Ave
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Chamber Orchestra of the Springs
PO Box 7911
Colorado Springs, CO 80933-7911

Colorado Springs Independence Center
21 E. Las Animas
Colorado Springs, CO 80903-4139

Colorado Springs Nonprofit Center 2 N. Cascade Ave Suite 110 Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Colorado Springs Philharmonic Orchestra
2630 Tenderfoot Hill Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80906

Colorado Springs Sports Corporation
219 West Colorado Avenue, Suite 200
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Colorado Springs Teen Court, Inc.
224 East Kiowa
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Colorado Vocal Arts Ensemble
PO Box 1993
Colorado Springs, CO 80901-1993

Committee for Responsible County Government
PO Box 87
Colorado Springs, CO 80901

Communities in Schools, Colorado Springs
P.O. Box 2107
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Community Council for Adolescent Development
121 E Pikes Peak Ave #354
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Community Health Centers Inc
340 Printers Parkway
Colorado Springs, CO 80910

Community Partnership for Child Development
2330 Robinson St.
Colorado Springs, CO 80904

Imagination in Education Enrichments
4734 El Camino Drive
Colorado Springs, CO 80918

Interfaith Hospitality Network 508 North Tejon Street Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Joint Initiatives for Youth and Families
31-A N. Farragut Avenue
Colorado Springs, CO 80909

Jolly Jills
Colorado Springs, CO 99999

Junior League of Colorado Springs
2914 Beacon St
Colorado Springs, CO 80907

Kennedy Center Imagination Celebration
1515 North Academy Blvd, Suite 200
Colorado Springs, CO 80909

KIDPOWER
627 North Weber St, Suite 6
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

KRCC
912 North Weber Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Latino Unity Council
PO Box 9701
Colorado Springs, CO 80932

Leadership Pikes Peak
PO Box 128
Colorado Springs, CO 80901-0128

League of Women Voters
PO Box 7888
Colorado Springs, CO 80933

Rebuilding Together with Christmas in April, Colorado Springs
1438 N Hancock Ave
Colorado Springs, CO 80903-2621

Rock Ledge Ranch Living History Association 1401 Recreation Way Colorado Springs, CO 80905

Rocky Mountain Student Theater Project
PO Box 1724
Colorado Springs, CO 80901

Rocky Mountain Women's Film Festival
1775 presidential Heights, #416
Colorado Springs, CO 80906

Ruth Washburn Cooperative Nursery School
914 North 19th Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80904

Season for Nonviolence - Rocky Mountain Alliance
292 Cobblestone Drive
Colorado Springs, CO 80906

Second Sight Center
5636 N Union Blvd
Colorado Springs, CO 80918-1940

SET of Colorado Springs
825 East Pikes Peak Avenue Building 29
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Southern Colorado AIDS Project
1301 S 8th St, Suite 200
Colorado Springs, CO 80906-1358

Spaceship Earth Foundation
2502 West Colorado Ave #208
Colorado Springs, CO 80904

Special Kids - Special Families
445 E. Cheyenne Mountain Blvd
Colorado Springs, CO 80906

Cheyenne Mountain Heritage Center
PO Box 38201
Colorado Springs, CO 80937

Cheyenne Mountain Zoo
4250 Cheyenne Mountain Zoo Road
Colorado Springs, CO 80906

Cheyenne Village
6275 Lehman Dr
Colorado Springs, CO 80918

Child Care Connections
125 North Parkside Suite 202 Colorado Springs, CO 80909

Children's Advocacy Center for the Pikes Peak Region
423 South Cascade Ave
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Children's Literacy Center
33 N Institute
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Chins Up Youth and Family Services
10 N. Farragut
Colorado Springs, CO 80909-5601

Citizens Project
121 East Pikes PEak, Suite 210
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Clean Air Campaign of the Pikes Peak Region
4543 Austin Bluffs Pky
Colorado Springs, CO 80918

Colorado Business Leadership Network
3630 Stinton Road Suite 103
Colorado Springs, CO 80907

Colorado College
14 East Cache La Poudre
Colorado Springs, CO 80903-3298

Cynergetics Institute
PO Box 6130
Colorado Springs, CO 80934

Devereux Cleo Wallace
2525 Highway 115 South
Colorado Springs, CO 80906

Domestic Violence Enhanced Response Team
705 South Nevada
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Dream Power Animal Rescue
P.O.Box 62923 Colorado Springs, CO 80962-2923

Dress for Success Colorado Springs
330 North Institute Suite B
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Drive Smart Colorado
705 S Nevada Avenue
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Easter Seals Southern Colorado
225 S. Academy Blvd. Suite 104
Colorado Springs, CO 80910-2768

El Cinco de Mayo
P.O. Box 17373
Colorado Springs, CO 80935

El Paso Medical Society Alliance
2760 N. ACADEMY BLVD. #207
Colorado Springs, CO 80917

Epimethian Press and Distribution
P.O. Box 2143
Colorado Springs, CO 80901

Fatherhood Foundation
102 E Pikes Peak Ave., Ste 306
Colorado Springs, CO

Learning Unlimited, Inc
3622 Agate Circle
Colorado Springs, CO 80909

March of Dimes Birth Defects National Foundation
421 South Tejon, Suite 236
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Martin Luther Homes, Inc
3707 Parkmoor Village Drive, #101
Colorado Springs, CO 80917

Memorial Hospital 1400 E Boulder Colorado Springs, CO 80909

Memorial Hospital Foundation
525 North Foote, Suite 303
Colorado Springs, CO 80909

Mental Health Assoc - El Paso County Chapter
12 North Meade Avenue
Colorado Springs, CO 80909

Muscular Dystrophy Association
5350 tomah Drive #2100
Colorado Springs, CO 80918

NAACP Colorado Springs
219 W. Colorado Avenue, Suite 306
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

NAACP Youth Council
603 S El Paso
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

National Alliance for the Mentally Ill/Colorado Springs Chapter
616 North Royer
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

National Coalition Building Institute
2925 Cedar Heights Drive
Colorado Springs, CO

Spencer Curtis Foundation, Inc
524 N. Tejon
Colorado Springs, CO 80904

Springs Community Theatre
5803 Santana Dr
Colorado Springs, CO 80918

Start To Achieve Foundation
P.O. Box 50083
Colorado Springs, CO 80949-0083

Suicide Prevention Partnership 3595 E. Fountain Blvd. Ste. B1
Colorado Springs, CO 80910

Switzer Counseling Center of the Colorado School of Professional Psychology
1710 East Pikes Peak Avenue
Colorado Springs, CO 80909

Teen Resources, Inc
2105 E. Bijou
Colorado Springs, CO 80909

Temple Shalom
1523 E. Monument St.
Colorado Springs, CO 80909

TESSA/Center for Prevention of Domestic Violence
PO Box 2662
Colorado Springs, CO 80901

Trails and Open Space Coalition
1426 N. Hancock Ave, #4N
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Tutmose Academy
1205 Shasta Dr
Colorado Springs, CO 80910

United States Association for Blind Athletes
33 N. Institute
Colorado Springs, CO

Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition
2508 1/2 West Colorado Ave, Suite 3
Colorado Springs, CO 80904

Colorado Festival of World Theatre
1631 Mesa Avenue
Colorado Springs, CO 80906

Colorado Institute for Conflict Resolution and Creative Leadership
PO Box 63720
Colorado Springs, CO 80962-3720

Colorado Legal Services
617 South Nevada Ave.
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Colorado Opera Festival
PO Box 1484 Colorado Springs, CO 80901

Women's Resource Agency
2132 E. Bijou
Colorado Springs, CO 80909

Workout, Ltd.
612 South Tejon
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Youth Outreach Center
1801 N Union Blvd
Colorado Springs, CO 80909

Full Circle Alternatives
P.O. Box 697
Colorado Springs, CO 80901

First Congregational Church - United Church of Christ
2320 Paseo Road
Colorado Springs, CO 80907

First Visitor
2220 E. Bijou Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80909

For the Children, Inc.
10195 Thunderhead Dr
Colorado Springs, CO 80925

Fourth Judicial District Disproportionate Minority Confinement Task Force
25 N. Farragut
Colorado Springs, CO 80909

Franciscan Family Wellness Program/US Catholic Conference 7665 Assisi Heights Colorado Springs, CO 80919

Friends of Black Forest Regional Park
3578 E. Hartsell Drive #121
Colorado Springs, CO 80920

Friends of Garden of the Gods
1401 Recreation Way
Colorado Springs, CO 80905

Friends of the Fountain Fund
235 S Nevada Ave
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Pikes Peak Community College Foundation
5675 S Academy Blvd, Campus Box 11
Colorado Springs, CO 80906-5498

NSFRE Southern Colorado Chapter
4250 Cheyenne Mountain Zoo
Colorado Springs, CO 80906

Nueva Ventura District 11
2560 International Circle
Colorado Springs, CO 80910

Opera Theatre of the Rockies
P.O.Box 8110
Colorado Springs, CO 80933

PEAK Parent Center
611 N. Weber, Suite 200
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Performing Arts for Youth Organization 2605A W. Colorado Ave., Suite 219 Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Pikes Peak Arkansas River Legal Aid
617 S. Nevada
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Pikes Peak Arts Council
PO Box 1073
Colorado Springs, CO 80901-1073

Pikes Peak Center on Deafness
2760 N. Academy Blvd, Suite 100
Colorado Springs, CO 80917

Pikes Peak Community Action Agency
722 South Wahsatch Ave
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

United States Fencing Association
One Olympic Plaza
Colorado Springs, CO 80909

United States Field Hockey Association
One Olympic Plaza
Colorado Springs, CO 80909

University of Colorado Theatreworks
PO Box 7150
Colorado Springs, CO 80933-7150

University of Colorado at Colorado Springs Graduate School of Public Affairs
PO Box 7150
Colorado Springs, CO 80933-7150

University of Colorado Foundation, Colorado Springs
PO Box 7150 Colorado Springs, CO 80933

Urban League of the Pikes Peak Region
PO Box 1979
Colorado Springs, CO 80901-1979

Urban Peak Colorado Springs
14 West Bijou
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

VIBES: Visually Impaired and Blind Skiers of Colorado Springs
2255 Westmoreland Road
Colorado Springs, CO 80907

Voters Network
8 S Nevada Avenue, Suite 402
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Colorado employers with employment non-discrimination including sexual orientation

City of Arvada
City of Boulder
City of Denver
City of Glendale
City of Lakewood
City of Manitou Springs
Boulder County
Denver County
Colorado Women's Chamber of Commerce
Colorado Business Council
Colorado Business Leadership Network
Colorado Workplace Equity Coalition
Auraria Library
Central Colorado Library System
Denver Public Library
Crested Butte Friends of the Library
Douglas Public Library Foundation
East Routt Library District
Friends of Montrose Library
Jefferson County Library Foundation
San Miguel County Public Library
American Indian College Fund
Colorado Mountain College
Community College of Denver
Colorado State University Ft. Collins
Colorado State University Pueblo
Ft. Lewis College
Front Range Community College Foundation
Mesa State College
Metropolitan State College of Denver
Naropa University
Trinidad State Junior College
University of Colorado
University of Denver
University of Northern Colorado
Western State College

Colorado Council of Churches
Colorado Bar Association
Colorado Women's Bar Association
Colorado Society for CPA's
Advanced Energy Industries Inc.
Amiron
AT&T Broadband
Auto-Trol
Bank of Cherry Creek
Brownstein Hyatt & Farber
Celestial Seasonings
CH2M Hill Inc.
Compatible Systems
Coors Brewing Company
Davis Graham & Stubbs
Gill Foundation/Gay & Lesbian Fund
Great West Healthcare
Holme Roberts & Owen
Hutchinson Black & Cook
ICG Communications
ICM Mortgage Corp.
Level 3 Communications
Mental Health Corp. of Denver
Merchant & Gould
Micromedex
Navigant International Inc.

Policy Studies Inc.
Quark Inc.
Qwest Communications
Sherman & Howard
StorageTek
Tanning Technology Corp.
Tattered Cover Bookstore
TCI Tele-Communications Inc.
Tess Communications
Verio Inc.
Wild Oats Markets Inc.

National employers with employment non-discrimination including sexual orientation
U.S. Dept of Defense
U.S. Central Intelligence Agency
U.S. Dept of Health & Human Services
U.S. Dept of Commerce
U.S. Postal Service
U.S. Dept of Education
U.S. Dept of Labor
U.S. Dept of Justice
U.S. Dept of Housing & Urban Development
U.S. Dept of the Interior
U.S. Dept of Transportation
Environmental Protection Agency
Federal Trade Commission
Library of Congress
NASA
Social Security Administration
National Education Association
American Federation of Teachers
National Science Foundation
American Bar Association
American Council of Churches
American Federation of Government Employees
AFL-CIO
International Association of Firefighters
Service Employees International Union
Hotel & Restaurant Employees Union
United Electrical Workers Union
United Auto Workers

Frequently Asked Questions

Would we face increased legal liability?
If your organization does not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation, then there is no increased liability at all. While concerns about unjustified claims are often raised, the evidence demonstrates that there are not significant claims and that in fact, a clear policy may reduce liability in the long run.

A government report released by the General Accounting Office found that in the states that have sexual orientation anti-bias laws, there was "no indication that these laws have generated a significant amount of litigation."

Not including sexual orientation can lead to more legal problems than including it. "Failure to institute such a policy can invite problems," attorney Howard Bard, a partner with Feder Semo Clark and Bard P.C., a benefits and employment law firm, says. "Having internal procedures to deal with discrimination and harassment is superior to confronting outside legal action."

Would our organization be required to provide domestic partner benefits as well?
Offering domestic partner benefits is a further step in promoting workplace equality and there is ample business justification for the practice. However, there is legal precedent for keeping the two issues distinct and adding sexual orientation to your non-discrimination policy does not mean that you must provide domestic partner benefits. In the 1994 lawsuit Ross v. Denver Department of Health and Hospitals, the Colorado Court of Appeals ruled that an employer prohibited from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is not be required to extend benefits to the partners of employees, saying that the issue was one of marital status.

Of employers that include sexual orientation in their EEO policies, 68% do not offer domestic partner benefits, while 32% do. Hewitt Associates *Domestic Partner Benefits*, August, 2000

Would our organization experience public backlash?
The majority of entities that implement employment non-discrimination do so outside of public view. To the extent that the policy change does garner outside attention it is much more likely to be positive than negative. Companies such as IBM, Wells Fargo, Eastman Kodak, Bank America, Xerox and Coors Brewing Company have all received positive publicity for their equitable employment practices.

For a long time, companies justified discrimination by claiming that their clients wouldn't stand for female or black professionals. But, in fact, firms did start to diversify and the clients did accept it. It is neither economically necessary nor morally justifiable for organizations, even conservative ones, to conform to prejudice from clients.

What about other employees that object to homosexuality?
People should be judged at work by their performance on the job. Any religious concerns about gay and lesbian co-workers should be checked at the workplace door – just as other religious differences already are. Most people of faith share this belief – 70% of Christians believe that gays should be protected from discrimination in the workplace (Greenberg Research, national survey of 1,007 voters).

Workplace policies regulate the behaviors, not the beliefs of employees.